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FLOOR DEBATE

February 9, 2005 LB 162

They go towards disease control. They also go towards monitoring weed, weed control and disease control. So those are some of the areas. Again, they have...the commission has worked hard. And they've had a study for the last two years, and contacted over 7,000 people. And 67 percent of those visiting the parks have been supportive of...actually 69 percent of those visiting the parks have been supportive of the increase in the park fees. I think those are only some of the reasons that we were looking at to increase the fees, include this in this bill. And as we have continued to discuss with you, it also does...the bill contains a number of other areas, establishing the one-day resident and nonresident fishing permit, and we think that that would be very desirable, again, to encourage people to partake of that activity while they are visiting our state. And, there's also, expand the lifetime habitat stamp to nonresidents. And also I think another important aspect are the veterans, reducing that age to 64 and charging the \$5 which then could also be met by...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR STUHR: ...federal. And again looking that of those 38 states that do charge fees, Nebraska is the lowest. Looking at the average of all of those states, it averaged about \$44 for an annual fee. We're looking at \$17 right now. But what we're trying to do is make up that gap between the daily fee and the annual fee, and increase that only by 50 cents a year for the next two years, or raising that fee by \$1, from \$3 to \$4, which would still make us at the lowest of any of the states. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Stuhr. There are no further lights on for the bracket motion till May 29. Senator Chambers, you're recognized to close on your motion to bracket LB 162 until May 29.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, if I withdraw a proposition before it's voted on, I can offer it again, because it's not a reconsideration; it's as though nothing was done. Senator Schrock and I are talking, so I'm going to withdraw that motion at this time.